

## COMMENTARY

### ESTHETIC TEMPLATES FOR COMPLEX RESTORATIVE CASES: RATIONALE AND MANAGEMENT

George C. Cho, DDS\*

Esthetic outcome is absolutely critical for esthetic-driven treatment plans especially in the absence of disease (e.g., caries, periodontal disease, and missing teeth). Any form of preview prior to any irreversible procedure should be attempted prior to beginning any definitive esthetic restorative treatment. This article discusses the various modalities of previewing the final outcome prior to initiating treatment, such as “clip-on” esthetic guides, dental imaging, subtractive visualization with indelible black markers, and their use of a removable esthetic template. They have discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the different modalities to previewing the final outcome.

Their technique is based upon denture esthetics utilizing a wax rim to initiate the optimum esthetic and phonetic position of the maxillary anterior teeth.<sup>1</sup> However, in nonedentulous situation, their premise to index the palate with a removable esthetic template can be very difficult if not impossible (due to the remaining dentition) to achieve any type of consistent retention and/or stability. The esthetic matrix would have great difficulty remaining in place during various lip positions for esthetics and phonetics.

This technique would have limited indications, primarily with those patients undergoing orthodontic therapy, where final visualization is necessary during the orthodontic treatment. This type of visualization is typically not necessary during the orthodontic phase, as there are always other landmarks to reference (e.g., existing teeth, frenum attachments, nose, and eyes). The use of an esthetic guide would be most valuable prior to the initiation of any treatment, whereby the objective of the esthetic treatment can be previewed by all involved—that is, patient, dentist, other specialists, and laboratory technicians.

I would have liked to have seen examples of their removable esthetic template under various lip movements to make their point regarding the efficacy and value of this type of esthetic template.

I believe the best form of removable esthetic template is one that utilizes the existing teeth for stabilization and retention: “clip-on.” Esthetics and phonetics can be viewed and heard readily with minimal interference with the oral structures.<sup>2</sup> The primary disadvantages are that the “clip-on” will give an overcontoured appearance; however, if designed and fabricated properly, it should be retentive and stable so that patients and other members of the dental team can place and remove it without breaking this prosthesis. Figures 1 through 3 show an example of a “clip-on”



Figure 1. Initial smile.



Figure 2. “Clip-on” esthetic template to visualize periodontal crown lengthening and new restorations with references to the smile line.



*Figure 3. Completed crown lengthening and crown restorations in full smile view.*

provisional restoration used to give information to the restorative dentist, patient, surgeon, and lab technician about the objective of esthetic treatment.

It is clear when dealing with esthetic multidisciplinary treatment, any esthetic guide is critical in informing and educating all involved including the patient so that the final outcome is predictable and accepted prior to initiating any irreversible procedure. If orthodontic treatment is necessary and if the patient or members of the dental team need to have an esthetic template during the orthodontic phase of treatment, this removable esthetic template technique would be the best form of evaluation for esthetics.

#### REFERENCES

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\*Associate professor, predoctoral director implant dentistry, codirector, Advanced Prosthodontics, USC School of Dentistry, Los Angeles, CA

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